

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS

APRIL 9, 2013

**Ensuring Healthy Food and Safe Environments for Youth in Detention Facilities**

The Los Angeles County Probation Department operates three juvenile halls and fifteen camps which house young men and women for a minimum of six months in an effort to rehabilitate them and place them on a pathway to transition back into their communities. In addition to providing a safe environment, one of its important functions is maintaining the emotional and physical health of each resident. California law requires the Probation Department to meet minimum requirements regarding nutrition, food service plans and medical diets at each of its facilities. In addition, the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (DPH) is tasked with monitoring compliance with these requirements and conducting environmental health inspections to ensure adherence to appropriate food safety regulation.

In 2010, the Board directed the Probation Department (Department) to develop a corrective action plan to bring the Department into compliance with state regulatory guidelines regarding dietary and nutritional requirements for youth in the camps and halls. Since that time, the Department has made progress. Multiple and serious violations

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MOLINA \_\_\_\_\_

YAROSLAVSKY \_\_\_\_\_

KNABE \_\_\_\_\_

ANTONOVICH \_\_\_\_\_

RIDLEY-THOMAS \_\_\_\_\_

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remain, however, that impact upon the conditions of confinement for the approximately 1,800 youth who reside in a camp or hall at any given time.

The most recent nutritional evaluations conducted by DPH in 2012 revealed multiple violations at many of the camps and halls including a failure to meet minimum nutrition and caloric diet requirements, lack of written food service plans, and failure to serve food that is reflected on the menu approved by a registered dietician. In addition, a 2012 DPH environmental report uncovered substantive deficiencies in that area as well.

It is critical that the County of Los Angeles provide the youth in its facilities with the appropriate servings of quality food that is nutritious and adheres to the required caloric amounts set forth by state regulations.

**I THEREFORE MOVE THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:**

- 1) Direct the Chief Probation Officer to report back to the Board in 60 days on the Probation Department's efforts to correct nutritional standards violations at the juvenile halls and camps per the 2012 Department of Public Health Juvenile Facility Health Inspection Reports. This report back shall include a description of a process to allow youth at each facility, so far as feasible given budget constraints, a reasonable degree of choice as to the food they receive;
- 2) Direct the Chief Probation Officer to develop a corrective action plan to address the environmental safety standard violations at the juvenile halls and camps per the 2012 Department of Public Health Juvenile Facility Health Inspection Reports and report back in 30 days and quarterly thereafter;

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- 3) Direct the Department of Public Health to re-inspect after any nutritional and environmental violations have occurred at the juvenile halls and camps within 60 days and report back to the Board on the re-inspection results. The Chief Probation Officer shall immediately provide the Board of Supervisors with a written compliance plan that describes how any outstanding violations will be remedied;
- 4) Direct the Chief Executive Officer, in collaboration with the Chief Probation Officer, Sheriff, County Counsel and the Director of the Department of Public Health, to report back to the Board of Supervisors on a proposed process or mechanism whereby the DPH could recover its costs for inspections of publicly-operated detention facilities; and
- 5) Direct the Chief Probation Officer, in collaboration with the Superintendant of the County Office of Education (LACOE), to develop a curriculum that informs youth as to the benefits of a healthy diet, to be presented to youth at the juvenile halls and camps.

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